

depth. The black spotting and other marking is also well developed in these specimens. It is of interest to find that the present female specimens do diverge somewhat from nominate females of *P. brooksi*, with the difference understandably less than in the males of the two races—as is normally the case with closely allied taxa of this group.

When revisiting the type-locality in 1966, in company with the late Mr Russell Barham, Mr Teare was fortunate enough to secure further males as well as the females, of this butterfly, and according to him the males were in all cases as distinctive as the original ones and gave full confirmation of the subspecific status of this insect.

The preparation of this article would not have been possible without the kind co-operation of the late Mr Russell Badham and Mr W. Teare in furnishing the necessary material.

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Acrolepia perlepidella Stainton (Lep.: Plutellidae)

By J. M. CHALMERS-HUNT

EARLY HISTORY

The earliest reference to this very pretty little moth is to be found in Stainton (1849: 19), at which time it appears that only two specimens were known. After describing it as new, he says:—“Two specimens: one in the Bentleyan collection (as *Formosella*), one in Mr Douglas’s collection.” In Stainton (1854: 170), a third example is recorded thus: “a specimen recently taken in Darenth Wood, in May, is in Mr Shepherd’s collection”.

The discovery in Britain of a species new to science and of such attractive appearance doubtless created a particular interest, and by 1858 it had been found at “Brs” (=Bristol) and as such was recorded in Stainton (1859) but without details. According to Hudd & Griffiths (1914: 37), the “Brs” records in Stainton’s *Manual* were contributed by two well-known microlepidopterists, Messrs. Sircorn of Brislington and P. H. Vaughan of Redland.

Barrett (1879) states that W. H. Grigg, of Bristol, caught several specimens of the moth in 1876. The foodplant was still unknown, nor had anyone previously even suspected the correct pabulum, but in the spring of 1879, Grigg with considerable ingenuity, succeeded in discovering the foodplant as *Inula conyza*, and in breeding the insect from mines that he had collected from it. Some of these mines he presented to Barrett, who (loc. cit.) wrote a detailed description of the nearly full-grown larva, of the cocoon, as well as a most interesting account of some of the larval habits. No mention is made of the locality of Grigg’s *perlepidella*, but in Hudd (1884: 85) is the following note: “Leigh Woods and the bank of the Avon. Mr Grigg succeeded in discovering the larvae of this local insect, mining the leaves of *Inula conyza* in Leigh Woods, in the spring”.

In E. R. Bankes coll. in BMNH are ten *perlepidella* bearing data. Some of these are labelled as from Grigg, others as from W. Machin and Hodgkinson, but all appear to have come from the Bristol district. One that is labelled “W. H. Grigg/Bristol/1892”, may have been among the

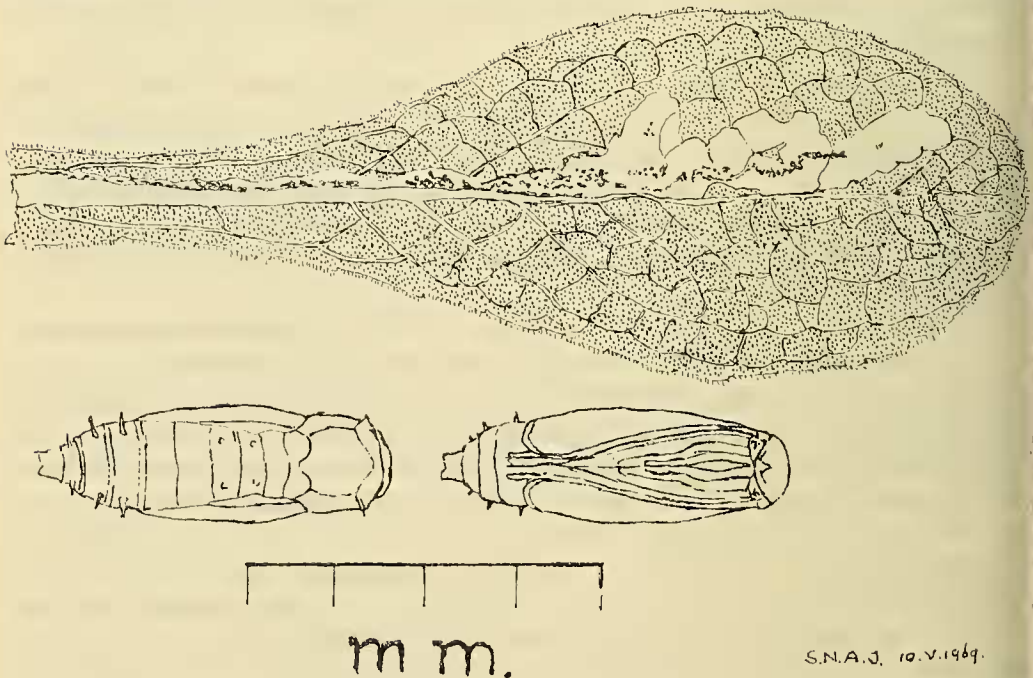
last to have been taken there, at least we have no knowledge of its having been seen there since.

RECENT OCCURRENCE

On May 11, 1967, after a lapse of some 75 years during which the species appears to have remained unnoticed in this country¹, Mr E. S. Bradford was examining a plant of *I. conyza* from the downs above Trottscliffe, Kent, when he was delighted and not a little astonished to perceive thereon a freshly emerged *perlepidella*. The plant was one of several *I. conyza* that were dug up for him by Col. A. M. Emmet as food for *Coleophora conyzae* Zeller, on the S. London field meeting on April 29 that year. The following year, at the S. London meeting at Trottscliffe on April 28, several members took leaves of *I. conyza* which were evidently mined by the larva of *perlepidella*, but failed to breed the insect.

I next visited the locality on April 25, 1969, and on this occasion was fortunate to find several mined leaves. A small larva accidentally disclosed from its mine measured 4mm., was yellow with dark yellowish-green dorsal line, and had a brownish-black head. During the whole of its existence, the larva apparently never quits the mine, and though I vainly endeavoured to induce this particular larva to recommence feeding—trying it with both the old mine, and as a last resort the parenchyma of a fresh leaf—it failed to do so and eventually died from starvation.

On a further visit on May 2, I found a number of full-grown larvae, also several cocoons each of which was situated in a leaf stalk at the base of a mine, and in due course reared a series of the insect, the moths



¹I have since come across the following record by T. Bainbrigge Fletcher for Gloucestershire, in Fletcher & Clutterbuck (1943, *Proc. Cotteswold Nat.Fld. Club*, 28 (2), 66): "Rodborough, 28.v.43, flying around *Inula conyza*". Furthermore, Mr J. Newton (*in litt.*) tells me that he took a specimen from near Tetbury, Gloucestershire, on 22.v.1925 (C.-H.).

emerging from May 16 to May 28, with no parasites. I understand that mines have also been taken this year at Trottiscliffe, by Col. Emmet and Messrs. Wakely and Heal, all of whom reared moths.

When I gave Mr Jacobs the mine shown for illustrating, the larva was not visible so that I assumed that it had finished feeding and was either preparing for pupation or had already done so. What I did not know then, however, was that the larva feeds at night, and towards full-growth may rest during the daytime at the base of the mine out of sight. This was evidenced by the fact that after drawing the mine, the following morning Mr Jacobs noticed that a further lobe had been added to it during the night!

There is a coloured figure of the imago by Jacobs (1949-50), but in my specimens the orange, purple-fuscous and pale yellow markings are more contrasted, so that the insect appears a good deal more handsome than it is depicted. This is explained by the fact that the only model to be had was an old specimen.

The species seems to be quite local, at least in Kent, and I could only find the larva to occur over a range of about half a mile. Examination of the food-plant immediately beyond these limits, both to the west and to the east of this chalk down, showed no sign of its presence. I suspect that the species may still occur near Bristol (notwithstanding the statement in Turner (1955: 178) that it is "now possibly extinct" there), almost certainly so on the limestone slopes about Rodborough, Glos., and perhaps elsewhere on steep hillsides that have escaped the plough and where there are good concentrations of the foodplant.

In conclusion, I wish to thank Mr S. N. A. Jacobs for his drawing of the pupa and mine, and at the same time to draw attention to the curious lateral protruberances on the pupa.

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Apatura iris

Return of the Prodigal Son

By MAJOR-GENERAL C. G. LIPSCOMB, C.B., D.S.O.

For several years now I have reared larvae of *Apatura Iris* on Sallow bushes in my garden with varying degrees of success, releasing the resulting butterflies in Blackmoor Copse Reserve.